



# March Newsletter

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There's a plethora of clichés when it comes to life: life is a journey (not a destination or a race), happiness is the key to life, life is what you make it, it's never too late to start again, everyday is a new beginning, and so on. Life, I have come to realize, is made up of a series of events that shape our journey, some of which we control and others where outside circumstances force us to adapt. Most of the time, however, as clichéd as it sounds, life is what we make it. This is especially the case when it comes to faith and the impact that we allow faith to have in our lives. As many of you are aware, for seven years I have been on a journey. In fall of 2016, I decided to see where my faith would take me. I felt called to ministry, but I wasn't sure the call was genuine. Perhaps I was just, after over twenty-five years, just ready for a career change – any career change. My journey began with one seminary class, which I audited instead of taking for credit because I had convinced myself that it would all stop there. Obviously, it didn't.

I'm writing these words now, because my thoughts this week are on my final ordination interviews that will take place the first of next week. Seven years and it comes to this. I wanted to share these thoughts because for the past three years you, knowingly or unknowingly, have been on this journey with me. A few of you have walked with me for the entire seven years and like me you may have wondered what was going to come of it. That's another cliché about life, by the way: you never walk through life alone. ordination process; in my case, this was Castleton UMC. The seven years, minimum, countdown begins.

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For those of you unfamiliar with the process, ordination in the United Methodist Church begins at the church level. An “inquiring candidate” approaches their pastor who, after meeting with them and discussing their call to ministry, recommends them to the Staff-Parish committee. The candidate fills out several forms (there are always forms!) and then meets in person with the committee. The pastor and the Staff-Parish committee vote to recommend the candidate to the church. If the vote is affirmative, the church holds a special charge conference and decides to sponsor the candidate for ministry to the Conference. The candidate then schedules a meeting with their District Superintendent who must also approve the candidate for the ministry process. The church that voted to sponsor the candidate is to support that person throughout the ordination process; in my case, this was Castleton UMC. The seven years, minimum, countdown begins.

The first year is as an “inquiring candidate.” During the first year, the candidate meets with their pastor, reads assigned books on ministry, attends a several-day retreat, and meets with a small group of other inquiring candidates. There is an interview with the District Committee on Ministry (“DCOM”), made up of several clergy and laity who ask questions about faith and the call to ministry. There’s a psychological examination and a background check. After one year, the inquiring candidate has a second interview and, if approved, becomes a certified candidate. During this stage, seminary also generally begins, as ordination requires a Master’s in Divinity degree from a Methodist-approved seminary. During the year of certified candidacy, there are more forms and more meetings. The candidate may be asked to preach in churches in need due to a pastor’s vacation or illness. This is known as “pulpit supply” and I served at New Life UMC in Shelby County for several months as their supply pastor. End of year two.

Year three begins. This is a time of “continued candidacy.” Seminary continues and must be completed before the next step. Seminary is a three-year minimum, if full-time, and most candidates will spend two years – or more – in this stage. There are more forms, more meetings with a mentor, and annual interviews with DCOM. Some candidates serve as part-time or interim pastors during this time; I served for six months as interim pastor at New Palestine UMC. Finally, upon graduation from seminary, the candidate is ready to move to the next stage: provisional membership and commissioning. To be commissioned as a provisional elder, there are more requirements, including a lengthy paper on theology. There is a lengthier interview, this time by the Board of Ordained Ministry; if approved, the candidate is now commissioned as a provisional elder at Annual Conference I was commissioned in 2020. So, if you’ve been able to follow all this, I was a certified candidate when I was first appointed as your pastor in 2019, I graduated from seminary in May 2020, and I was commissioned in June 2020.

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Three years are required between commissioning and ordination. During these three years, there are more forms, another psych eval, more background and credit checks, more meetings, more retreats, and more requirements. The Board of Ordained Ministry makes a site visit to the church and meets with church leaders to discuss how ministry is progressing and where improvements might be made. This happened here a year ago. Having made my way through all of that, I now, along with several other provisional elders, am facing my (hopefully) final interviews for ordination the first of next week. Our paperwork has been accepted and all other requirements have been met. Now we will be interviewed by the Board of Ordained Ministry on matters relating to theology, church leadership and administration, and our call to ordination. Those who “pass” will be ordained as elders in full connection at Annual Conference in June of this year.

I’m writing this to share a bit of my journey, but also to continue ask you to continue to journey with me. I know many of you have, and will be, praying for me and I hope you continue to pray for me. I need it! I also know that the day after I am ordained, God willing this June, I will still have the same human limitations I have today. I will not have all the answers. I will make mistakes. I will need grace and forgiveness. But my prayer, for all of us together, is that we continue to forge new ways to be the hands and feet of Christ in our community. You will be hearing more soon about a new “breakthrough prayer initiative.” You may have seen little signs around the church mentioning prayer. What might this look like for us? I don’t know, but time will tell. The rooms downstairs are looking good and about ready for new adventures. What will that look like? That will be part of our ongoing discussion. I pray that we feel empowered to journey together ... and that we find time for laughter along the way. God bless you and God bless IUMC!

Pastor Denise



### **The Chosen Bible Study Returns!**

Mark your calendars! On Thursday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 pm, we are restarting our Bible study based on “The Chosen.” Last fall we looked at season 1; now we begin season 2. Each week we will watch part or all of an episode, and then discuss the episode as it relates to Scripture.

If you didn’t make it to season 1, you are still welcome for season 2. You can go back and watch season 1 on your own through The Chosen app or on YouTube, or we will begin with an overview of season 1 before jumping into the next season – so, either way you will be prepared!

Where: The parlor

When: Starting April 20 at 6 pm

Cost: None – there will be free handouts available.

Hope to see you April 20!

# IUMC Easter Egg Hunt

**Saturday, April 1st at 10:00 a.m.**

**The event is open to the youth in the community, ages toddler thru 5<sup>th</sup> grade.**



**Now collecting bags of small wrapped cany. Place them in the candy barn.**



Now there are two ways to start your weekday off right with a short meditation including Scripture, reflections, a question to ponder, and/or a prayer for the day. It will take less than five minutes of your time but help you stay focused on your faith.

1. Meditate at Eight on our church Facebook page. Go on Facebook and look for Irvington United Methodist Church. Every weekday morning, Monday through Friday, a short meditation/devotional will post. The daily post takes just a few minutes to read. Too busy to read at 8 am? The post stays up on the Facebook page and can be read later in the day. Miss a day? The day before ... and the day before ... and the day before is still there.

Want to help us out? Share Meditate at Eight on your Facebook page. It's the Facebook way of telling your family and friends and inviting them to check it out. There's a share link to the bottom right of each daily mediation. Help us expand our reach!

2. Did you know our church also has a YouTube channel. Go to YouTube and look for "Shining the Light with IUMC." A picture of our rose window (see above) is with our name, so you'll know you're in the right place. In addition to sermons, you can listen to the daily meditation on your phone or computer. While you're there, hit the subscribe button ... it costs you nothing and will help us reach more people.

Make Meditate at Eight a daily habit ... whether you join us at 8 am, noon, or 8 pm.



### Revised Schedule

The Lenten soup suppers and services are back. The soup supper is at 6 pm; the service begins at 7 pm. Get your calendars marked now for the following dates:

March 8: Our Lady of Lourdes (me preaching again at OLL!)

March 15: **IUMC** (Fr. Rick from OLL preaching)

March 22: Irvington Presbyterian (Fr. Frank from St. Matthew's preaching)

March 29: Downey Ave. Christian Church (Pastor Maureen Wilson from Irv. Pres preaching)



### Would You Be Willing to “Adopt” a Room?

An announcement was made in church a couple months ago that we hired new custodians for our church and pre-school. The problem is that our two new hires, combined, are part-time and, as you know, our church is BIG! There is simply no way to adequately clean the entire church in the time allotted ... and we simply can't afford to pay for more hours.

Would you be willing to adopt a room in the church and clean it once a week? We have identified some smaller areas of the church that could be cleaned well in an hour or less each week. We can assist you in getting access that will work with your schedule and will provide cleaning supplies (of course, if you have a preference, you can bring your own).

Here are the rooms/areas we have identified: (that remain on the list).

The music director's office

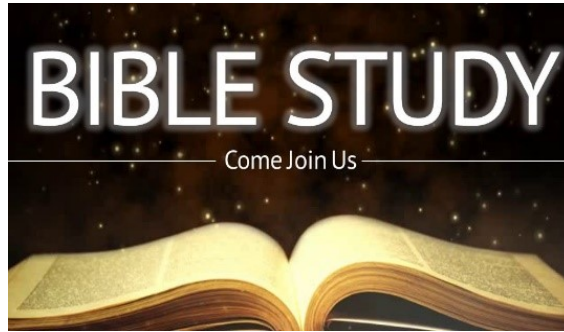
The youth room

Fellowship Hall (this is large and could be divided, but the cleaning needed is minimal – and would not include the restrooms or stage)

Fellowship Hall Kitchen

The preschool custodian will take care of the preschool classrooms and restrooms. The church custodian will take care of restrooms, the main sanctuary, hallways, the parlor, church offices, entryways, the south narthex, some downstairs cleaning, windows, etc.

If you are willing to take “adopt a room” either let Pastor Denise know or contact the church office. Also, if there is any area of the church you think needs TLC and you want to volunteer for that, no reasonable offer will be refused!!! If we work together, we can keep our church looking beautiful!



### **Sundays at 9:15 am in the Parlor**

We are studying Methodist Questions, Methodist Answers. Come join the conversation, and learn more about what it means to be a Methodist.

When: Sunday morning at 9:15 a.m.

Where: our Parlor

Coffee, Cookies, questions are welcome!

### **Mondays at 1:00 pm in the Parlor & on Zoom**

We are studying the Book of Exodus. Bring your Bible and join us. Handouts are available each week and you can join in any time. It doesn't matter if you've studied the Book of Exodus before or struggle finding it in your Bible. All are welcome!

Meeting ID: 813 7695 8874    Passcode: 216949

**WE WANT YOU (to join us  
in a small group, that is)  
where you can learn, ask,  
laugh, share....**

### **SUNDAYS**

9:15 A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:30 A.M. WORSHIP

Irvington United Methodist Church

30 N Audubon Road

Indianapolis IN 46219

### **Our Staff**

Denise Robinson, **Pastor**

Gregory Baranovsky, **Music Director/Organist**

Kim Fulton, **Office Manager/Financial Secretary**

Lori Steuer, **Preschool Director**

Greg Boyce, **Custodian**

We are on the Web at:

**[www.irvingtonumc.org](http://www.irvingtonumc.org)**

Our email address and telephone number are:

**[info@irvingtonumc.org](mailto:info@irvingtonumc.org)**

**(317) 356-7231**

**Visit us on Facebook**

## **MARCH 12TH**



## **Chair Exercise Class Update**

The class/dinner will resume on April 12th.

